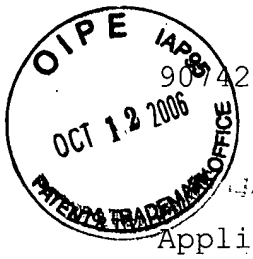
10-13-06 AF/1FW



90742 PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	R. Mark Halligan	Art Unit: 3623
Serial No.:	10/701,889	
Filed:	November 5, 2003	
For:	METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR THE DISCOVERY OF TRADE SECRETS INCLUDING THE COLLECTION, COMPILATION, CORRELATION, INTEGRATION, CATEGORIZATION, AND REPORTING OF DATA ABOUT TRADE SECRETS	
Examiner:	Boyce, A.	
Attorney Docket No.:	90742	

REPLACEMENT APPELLANT'S BRIEF UNDER 37 CRF §1.192

Mail Stop: Appeal Brief
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In response to the Final rejection of November 14, 2005 and in support of the applicant's Notice of Appeal filed February 2, 2006, the applicant requests consideration of the following:

I. Real Party in Interest.

The real party in interest is Trade Secret Office, Inc., by assignment dated February 24 and 25, 2004.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences.

None.

III. Status of Claims.

Claims 1-52 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2003/0158745 to Katz et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,397 to Jacobsen et al.

IV. Status of Amendments.

The claims have not been amended since the final Office Action of November 14, 2005.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter.

Claim 1 is limited to "A method of discovering trade secrets of an organization." Support for this limitation may be found in the specification on page 11, lines 7-9.

Claim 1 is also limited to "collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets through an input device of a computer from a plurality of persons of the organization into a database of the computer." Support for collecting trade secret information from a plurality of persons of an organization is supported within the specification at page 11, lines 9-10. A "means for entering the data . . . called a user interface device" is described in the specification at page 14, lines 24-26 and is shown in FIG. 1. The collection of information about trade secrets into a database is discussed in the specification at page 11, lines 14-17. A list of potential trade secret data is shown within the specification in Table A on pages

20-21.

Claim 1 is also limited to "the computer analyzing the collected sets descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets to define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization." The specification page 21, last full paragraph to page 26, second full paragraph discusses a correlation processor within the computer and FIGs. 4 and 6 show the analysis of collected sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets to define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization.

Claim 1 is also limited to "the computer generating a report containing the non-redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization." The specification: page 26, third paragraph, describes a report processor within the computer and FIG. 8 depicts the generation of reports containing the non-redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization.

Claim 2 is limited to "correlating among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets having at least some redundant entries to identify sets descriptive

information about potential trade secrets that are related by redundancy and sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are unrelated." The correlation among the sets of information is described within the specification from page 21, last paragraph to page 24, line 2 and the correlation is shown in FIG. 4.

Claim 2 is also limited to "integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with non-redundant entries that together with the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with unrelated entries define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets." The integration of redundant entries is described within the specification beginning on page 25, line 1 to page 26, line 7 and is shown in FIG. 6.

Claim 27 is limited to "A programmed computer for discovering trade secrets of an organization." Support for this limitation may be found in the specification on page 11, lines 7-9.

Claim 27 is further limited to "means for collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets from a plurality of persons of the organization into a database." The collection of sets of description information about potential trade secrets is discussed within the specification beginning on page 18, line 17 to the end of page 20. Page 14, line 23 to page 16, line 2 discusses "means for entering data . . . called a user interface device." Other means for collecting sets of descriptive information

may include web forms served to web browsers on client machines (page 18, line 20), or speech recognition equipment or software (page 19, lines 15-23).

Claim 27 is also limited to "means for analyzing the collected sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets to define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization." FIG. 12 shows a correlation processor within the computer that correlates and eliminates redundancy. Page 16, line 4 recites the computer programs within the computer and page 21, last full paragraph to page 23, second full paragraph of the specification discusses and FIG. 4 shows the steps of the programs that analyze the collected sets of descriptive information to correlate potential trade secrets. Page 24, line 20 to page 26, line 7 discusses and FIG. 6 shows the integration and elimination of potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae.

Claim 27 is further limited to "means for generating a report containing the non-redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization. The specification: page 26, third paragraph, describes and FIG. 12 shows a report processor within the computer. Page 16, line 4 recites the computer programs within the computer and FIG. 8 depicts the computer program steps for generation of reports containing the non-

redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization.

Claim 28 is limited to "means for correlating among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets having at least some redundant entries to identify sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are related by redundancy and sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are unrelated." FIG. 12 shows a correlation processor within the computer. Page 16, line 4 refers to the computer programs within the computer and page 21, last paragraph to page 23, second full paragraph of the specification discusses and FIG. 4 shows the steps of the programs that correlate the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets having at least some redundant entries to identify sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are related by redundancy and sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are unrelated.

Claim 28 is also limited to "means for integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with non-redundant entries that together with the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with unrelated entries define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets." FIG. 12 shows an integration processor with the computer. Page 16, line 4 refers to the computer programs within the computer

and page 24, line 3 to page 26, line 7 describes the program steps for integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with non-redundant entries that together with the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with unrelated entries define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets.

VI. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal.

Whether claims 1-52 are obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2003/0158745 to Katz et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,397 to Jacobsen et al. The rejections of claims 1-52 are appealed.

VII. Argument.

A. The Rejections of claims 1-52 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2003/0158745 to Katz et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,397 to Jacobsen et al.

One significant element of applicant's invention that distinguishes it from the prior art is the elimination of redundancy among a plurality of descriptions of trade secrets entered by a plurality of persons. In general, there are three methods for creating a database of trade secret descriptions without redundancy.

One method is to have all of the trade secret descriptions entered by a single person. This is clearly unworkable in a large organization due to the number of trade secrets involved and the communication requirement of providing a single person with all of the technical and judgment data needed to properly enter every description.

The second method is to have a number of persons knowledgeable about the organization's trade secrets coordinate such that no person ever enters a second description of the same trade secret. Once again, this is unworkable in a large organization due to the number of persons who must necessarily be involved in this coordination.

The third method for creating a database of trade secret descriptions without redundancy is to allow multiple descriptions of the same trade secret to be entered and to have the computer system subsequently discover the redundant entries and eliminate the redundancy, reducing to one the number of descriptions of any single trade secret. The need for coordination among a plurality of persons is eliminated, as is the bottleneck of a single person performing all entry tasks. The claimed method and programmed computer are substantially directed to this third method.

It should be noted that the elimination of redundancy is already practiced in some other kinds of databases, but not trade secret databases. In the field of contact databases, for example, containing the names, addresses, phone numbers and other

information for a person's business or personal contacts, elimination of redundancy is prior art. These schemes for elimination of redundancy rely on the fact that some of the contact information, such as telephone numbers and addresses, are unique identifiers. That is, only one person can have a given phone number. In addition, a contact's name, while not generally unique across the entire population, will generally be a unique identifier within one person's contact database. The elimination of redundancy in these databases is a simple task, relying on the fact that unique identifiers are available to identify duplicate or redundant entries for processing to eliminate the redundancy.

Trade secret databases do not contain any such unique identifiers. Duplicate and redundant entries entered by different people will contain different names and different descriptions for the trade secret. Elimination of redundancy in this case is a very difficult problem, and consequently no prior art exists for a method of eliminating redundant entries in trade secret databases. Applicant's invention for eliminating redundancy in trade secret databases is distinguished from prior art that eliminates redundancy in other types of databases because the claimed invention operates without any need for the unique identifiers that simplify identifying duplicate or redundant entries and eliminating the redundancy in the other types of databases. Applicant's method of eliminating redundancy in the database absent unique identifiers enables the realization of the significant benefits described in

conjunction with organizations by allowing multiple persons across the organization to enter trade secret data without the coordination and communication complexity which would otherwise be necessary.

Claims 1-52 have been rejected as being obvious over Katz et al. in view of Jacobsen et al. The Examiner admits that "Katz et al does not disclose analyzing the collected sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the set of described information" (Office Action of 11/14/05, page 3). However, the Examiner goes on to assert that "it would have been obvious . . . to include the elimination of redundancy via the clustering of documents in Katz et al, as seen in Jacobsen et al, as an efficient means of searching in a set of structured documents" (Office Action of 11/14/05, page 3).

It should be noted in this regard that neither Katz nor Jacobsen, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest the elimination of redundant or identical entries. Both references are directed to searching and Examiner notes that a search for similar entries will of necessity also turn up identical or nearly identical ones. However, the identification of identical or nearly identical entries is not the same as eliminating them.

Applicant's disclosure makes clear that the elimination of redundancy means the reduction of multiple descriptions of any single trade secret to a single description of each trade secret (or small number of descriptions in the case of overlapping trade

secrets) in the database, not the clustering of redundant descriptions. However, even without regard to the applicant's disclosure, Examiner's arguments are believed to fail upon any of a number of different levels.

For example and on a first level, it is believed that the Examiner's arguement fails upon recourse to the dictionary. Eliminate is defined as "to get rid of; to remove". Redundant is defined as "exceeding what is necessary or normal; characterized by or containing an excess; using more words than necessary". "Elimination of redundancy" in the descriptions of trade secrets then means to get rid of or remove that which exceeds what is normal or necessary, the excess, the words beyond what is necessary.

Applicant's invention removes identical descriptions from the trade secret list of the organization, replacing them with a single entry. Where there may have been a hundred near-identical descriptions for a single trade secret entered by a hundred people within an organization, there is now only one entry, containing only one set of data fields. The excess, the data fields beyond what are necessary to describe a trade secret, that which exceeds the necessary level of description of a trade secret -- a single set of data fields in one database entry -- has been removed.

Examiner argues that clustering of the hundred descriptions of that same trade secret constitutes an elimination of redundancy, as there is now one entry -- a cluster of one

hundred descriptions. The argument fails because nothing has been removed. The excess, that which is more than what is necessary, is still there. Putting five cats in a bag does not result in one cat. Carrying it further, twenty legs are an excess of what is necessary to constitute a cat, and that excess has not been removed by the act of putting the five cats in one bag.

Finally, one can go once more to the dictionary. Cluster is defined as "a number of similar things growing together or of things or persons collected or grouped closely together". The dictionary offers the synonym 'bunch'. Thus collecting a number of redundant descriptions of trade secrets together into a cluster has not solved the problem -- a bunch of descriptions for each single trade secret still exists, not one.

Ultimately, we can look to the useful and tangible result provided by the applicant's invention. The useful and tangible result is a database that contains very little beyond what is necessary to describe the total number of unique trade secrets of an organization. If 30 data fields are necessary to describe a trade secret, then, using applicant's invention, 1,000 trade secrets can be described in 30,000 fields. Only 30,000 fields need to be stored, analyzed, sorted, reviewed by human evaluators, printed out for review or documentation.

This same useful and tangible result is not achieved by Examiner's construction from the prior art. If each of those 1,000 trade secrets had 100 redundant entries, Examiner's construction

would indeed result in 1,000 clusters, but those clusters would contain 3,000,000 data fields. No simplification would have been accomplished, and the significant benefit of applicant's invention would not be achieved. Examiner's construction of clustering similar entries may be obvious in light of the prior art, but that construction is not the same or equivalent to the applicant's claimed invention. On this basis alone, the independent claims are non-obvious over the combination of Katz et al. and Jacobsen et al.

On a completely different level, Examiner's arguments fail for a number of more practical reasons. For example, Examiner's arguments regarding Katz et al. appear to presume the existence of identical or nearly identical entries. In this regard, Katz et al. explicitly states that "the various entries in the database are respectively stored on the PC's 11, 14, 31, or 34 of the user who entered the information" (Katz et al., par. [0033]). Since the entries are stored on the PC of the user who entered the information, it is unlikely that there would be identical entries unless the user intentionally created duplicate entries for some reason. Since Katz et al. would not contain duplicate entries, any modification of Katz et al. by Jacobsen et al. to eliminate duplicate entries would be futile or would likely render Katz et al. unsuitable for its intended purpose.

Further, how does one cluster records in a database that includes a number of PCs 11, 14, 31, 34? Are the clustered documents located on one PC of the many PCs 11, 14, 31, 34? If so,

then doesn't that conflict with the express teachings of Katz et al. where "the various entries in the database are respectively stored on the PC's 11, 14, 31, or 34 of the user who entered the information" (Katz et al., par. [0033])?

On the other hand, if clustering documents does not mean bringing documents together, then doesn't that necessarily mean that clustering under Jacobson et al. is simply akin to generating a report? However, the generation of a report does not require changes to the database (i.e., elimination of redundant or duplicate entries).

On still another level, both Katz et al. and Jacobson et al. operate upon static databases by means of search queries. Once information is entered by the Katz et al. user into the PC 11, 14, 31 or 34 of the user, the information presumably remains static until changed by the user. To access the information, "the user submits a query using innovation query page 1200" (Katz et al., par. [0052]) and "If any matching entries are found (s112), the matching entries are returned to the querying PC 11" (Katz et al., par. [0053]).

Rather than modifying a static database, the Jacobson et al. "invention provides a method for clustering documents in answer to a query" (Jacobson et al., col. 1, lines 58-59). As such, a necessary element of the Jacobson et al. system is a search query provided by a user.

Rather than using search queries, the claimed invention operates by "comparing the values entered for key fields" of entries (specification, page 22) as a mechanism for aggregating entries. As such, the claimed invention does not need or use search queries.

Since Katz et al. and Jacobsen et al. (and the combination) fail to teach or suggest, inter alia, the elimination of redundancy among a group of trade secrets, the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation. Since the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation, the rejections are improper and should be reverse.

B. The Rejections of claims 1 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2003/0158745 to Katz et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,397 to Jacobsen et al.

Claims 1 and 27 are limited to the method step of (and apparatus for) "analyzing the collected sets of trade secret information using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the set of trade secret information to define a collection of potential trade secrets of the organization". Since Katz et al. merely creates a data base and method for accessing the database and Jacobson et al merely provides a method of clustering identifiers of documents, the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim

limitation. Since the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation, the rejections are improper and should be reversed.

C. The Rejections of claims 2 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Pat. Appl. No. US 2003/0158745 to Katz et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,167,397 to Jacobsen et al.

Dependent claim 2 and independent claim 28 are limited to "integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of trade secret information". However, since Katz et al. and Jacobson et al. both deal with static databases, there is no integration of redundant entries as under the claimed invention.

Since Katz et al. and Jacobson et al. fail to provide any teaching of integration of entries, the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation. Since the combination fails to teach or suggest each and every claim limitation, the rejections are improper and should be reversed.

D. A Prima Facie Case of Obviousness Has Not Been Established

The Federal Circuit has continually held that the Examiner has the burden under 35 U.S.C. §103 of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness. In re Oetiker, 977 F.2d 1443, 24 USPQ2d 1443 (Fed. Cir. 1992); In re Fine, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d

1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). This burden may be satisfied only by showing that some objective teaching in the prior art or knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art would lead that individual to the claimed invention. For example, as the Federal Circuit has held recently, as well as on numerous other occasions: "[t]here must be some reason, suggestion or motivation found in the prior art whereby a person of ordinary skill in the field of the invention would make the combination." In re Oetiker, supra, 24 USPQ2d at 1446.

Moreover, the mere fact that the prior art references could be modified in the manner proposed by the Examiner would not have made the modification obvious unless there is some motivation or suggestion in the prior art to do so. In re Gordon, 773 F.2d 900, 221 USPQ 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984), also see In re Fritch, 972 F.2d 1260, 23 USPQ2d 1781, 1783 (Fed. Cir. 1992) (The mere fact that the prior art may be modified in the manner suggested by the Examiner does not make the modification obvious unless the prior art suggested the desirability of the modification).

When making an assessment of the obviousness of the claimed invention, the prior art, viewed as a whole, must "suggest the desirability, and thus the obviousness, of making the combination." In re Beattie, 974 F.2d 1309, 24 USPQ2d 1040 (Fed. Cir. 1992), quoting Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GMBH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 730 F.2d 1452, 1462, 221 USPQ 481, 488 (Fed. Cir. 1984). Similarly, the Examiner, under §103, must consider the

claimed subject matter "as a whole". In assessing the claimed subject matter "as a whole", the results and advantages of the claimed invention must be considered. Diversitech Corp. v. Century Steps, Inc., 850 F.2d 675, 7 USPQ2d 1315 (Fed. Cir. 1988); In re Chupp, 816 F.2d 643, 2 USPQ2d 143 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

It is incumbent upon the Examiner to demonstrate that the proposed combination of reference teachings is proper. Where no express teaching or suggestion is apparent from the references, the Examiner must establish, with evidence or reasoning, why one skilled in the art would have been led by the relevant teachings of the applied references to make the proposed combination. In re Gordon, 733 F.2d 900, 221 USPQ 1125 (Fed. Cir. 1984); ACS Hospital System, Inc. v. Montefiorde Hospital, 732 F.2d 1572, 221 USPQ 929 (Fed. Cir. 1984). When making an obviousness rejection, "[i]t is impermissible, however, simply to engage in hindsight reconstruction of the claimed invention, using the applicant's structure as a template". In re Gorman, 933 F.2d 982, 18 USPQ2d 1885 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Applicant submits that it does not require a close examination of the record to determine that the Examiner has failed to meet the burden of establishing a prima facie case of obviousness. In general, the Examiner has failed to establish any credible basis for believing that the combination contemplates the reduction and elimination of redundant entries (on any level). Even assuming arguendo that such a suggestion were present (which

it is not) the Examiner has failed to provide any basis for why one skilled in the art would have been led by the relevant teachings of the applied references to make the proposed combination or how that combination could be used to reduce or eliminate redundant entries.

In general, Katz et al. is directed to a method of identifying files within the PC of a user that entered the files. Jacobsen et al. is directed to methods of clustering similar entries. Taken together, Katz et al. and Jacobsen et al. merely suggest a better way of finding and organizing similar entries. While the combination may be of benefit in quickly finding related information, there is certainly no teaching of any method of improving the content and structure of a trade secret database. Nothing within either reference even suggests the possibility of eliminating redundant entries. As such, the combination of Katz et al. and Jacobsen et al. clearly fails to provide any teaching or suggestion of the claimed invention.

For the foregoing reasons, reversal of the rejections of claims 1-52, as now presented, is believed to be in order and such action is earnestly solicited.

IX. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, allowance of claims 1-52, as now presented, is believed to be in order. It is respectfully requested that this Board reverse the decision of the Examiner in all respects.

Respectfully submitted,

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APPENDIX OF THE CLAIMS

In the claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of discovering trade secrets of an organization, such method comprising the steps of:

collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets through an input device of a computer from a plurality of persons of the organization into a database of the computer;

the computer analyzing the collected sets descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets to define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization; and

the computer generating a report containing the non-redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 1 wherein the analysis step implemented within the computer further comprises:

correlating among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets having at least some redundant entries to identify sets descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are related by redundancy and sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are unrelated; and

integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with non-redundant entries that together with the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with

unrelated entries define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, wherein the step of collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets further comprises conducting interviews of each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 3, further comprising downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request descriptive information about potential trade secrets from each person of the plurality of persons.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, further comprising collecting information from each person of the plurality of persons regarding the identities of a plurality of other persons who may have information about the trade secrets of the organization.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 5, further comprising collecting said identities by means of conducting interviews of each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 6 further comprising downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request said identities from each person of the plurality of persons.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, further comprising collecting information from each person of the plurality of persons regarding the locations of the trade secrets of the organization.

9. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 8, further comprising collecting said information on locations by means of conducting interviews of each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

10. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 9 further comprising downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request said information on locations from each person of the plurality of persons.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2 wherein the step of correlating further comprises matching respective information entry fields of the plurality of fields of the database entries and marking entries with matching fields as belonging to a single potential trade secret group.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 11 wherein the plurality of information entry fields so matched further comprises a field for a subject matter of the trade secret.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 11 wherein the plurality of information entry fields so matched further comprises a field for a format of the trade secret.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 11 wherein the plurality of information entry fields so matched further comprises a field for a product or service enhanced by the trade secret.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 11 wherein the step of correlating further comprises performing key word searching of the plurality of fields of each potential trade secret group.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 15, further comprising improving the performance of said correlation by replacing any keywords encountered that are associated with a corresponding master keyword in a table of synonym keywords with the corresponding master keyword.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 15 wherein the step of correlating further comprises subdividing each potential trade secret group into more specific sub-groups based on the analysis of keywords contained in the plurality of fields.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 17 wherein the step of correlating further comprises subdividing each potential trade secret group into more specific sub-groups where each sub-group has at least a predefined number of keywords in common.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 18, wherein the step of integrating further comprises using common keywords from keyword fields of multiple potential trade secret entries being integrated as a common keyword field in

the resulting non-redundant trade secret entry.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 18, wherein the step of integrating further comprises using non-common keywords and their frequency of occurrence in the keyword field of multiple potential trade secret entries being integrated as a non-common keyword field in the resulting non-redundant trade secret entry.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2 wherein the step of integrating further comprises forming predetermined mathematical quantities to represent a characteristic value and an error range for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 21 wherein the step of integrating further comprises forming an arithmetic mean to represent the characteristic value for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 21 wherein the step of integrating further comprises forming a standard deviation to represent the error range for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, further comprising generating data mining signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, further comprising generating content filtering signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of discovering trade secrets as in claim 2, further comprising generating electronic document scanning signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

27. (Previously Presented) A programmed computer for discovering trade secrets of an organization, such programmed computer comprising:

means for collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets from a plurality of persons of the organization into a database;

means for analyzing the collected sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets using logical and mathematical formulae to identify and eliminate any redundancy among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets to define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization; and

means for generating a report containing the non-redundant descriptive information about potential trade secrets of the organization.

28. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 27 wherein the means for analysis further comprises:

means for correlating among the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets having at least some redundant entries to identify sets of descriptive information

about potential trade secrets that are related by redundancy and sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets that are unrelated; and

means for integrating redundant entries among the respective sets into compiled sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with non-redundant entries that together with the sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets with unrelated entries define a collection of descriptive information about potential trade secrets.

29. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, wherein the means for collecting sets of descriptive information about potential trade secrets further comprises means for conducting interviews of each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

30. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 29, further comprising means for downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request descriptive information about potential trade secrets from each person of the plurality of persons.

31. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, further comprising means for collecting information from each person of the plurality of persons regarding the identities of a plurality of other persons who may have information about the trade secrets of the organization.

32. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 31, further comprising means for collecting said identities by means of conducting interviews of

each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

33. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 32 further comprising means for downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request said identities from each person of the plurality of persons.

34. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, further comprising means for collecting information from each person of the plurality of persons regarding the locations of the trade secrets of the organization.

35. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 34, further comprising means for collecting said information on locations by means of conducting interviews of each person of the plurality of persons over an electronics communications network.

36. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 35 further comprising means for downloading a web form containing a plurality of information entry fields that request said information on locations from each person of the plurality of persons.

37. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28 wherein the means for correlating further comprises means for matching respective information entry fields of the plurality of fields of the trade secret information

entries and marking trade secret information entries with matching fields as belonging to a single potential trade secret group.

38. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 37 wherein the plurality of matching information entry fields so matched further comprises means for recording a field for a subject matter of the trade secret.

39. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 37 wherein the plurality of matching information entry fields so matched further comprises a field for a format of the trade secret.

40. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 37 wherein the plurality of matching information entry fields so matched further comprises a field for a product or service enhanced by the trade secret.

41. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 37 wherein the means for correlating further comprises means for performing key word searching of the plurality of fields of each potential trade secret group.

42. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 41, further comprising means for improving the performance of said correlation by replacing any keywords encountered that are associated with a corresponding master keyword in a table of synonym keywords with the corresponding master keyword.

43. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 41 wherein the means for correlating further comprises means for subdividing each potential trade secret

group into more specific sub-groups based on the analysis of keywords contained in the plurality of fields.

44. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 43 wherein the means for correlating further comprises means for subdividing each potential trade secret group into more specific sub-groups where each sub-group has at least a predefined number of keywords in common.

45. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 44, wherein the means for integrating further comprises means for using common keywords from keyword fields of multiple potential trade secret entries being integrated as a common keyword field in the resulting non-redundant trade secret entry.

46. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 44, wherein the means for integrating further comprises means for using non-common keywords and their frequency of occurrence in the keyword field of multiple potential trade secret entries being integrated as a non-common keyword field in the resulting non-redundant trade secret entry.

47. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28 wherein the means for integrating further comprises means for forming predetermined mathematical quantities to represent a characteristic value and an error range for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

48. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 47 wherein the means for integrating

further comprises means for forming an arithmetic mean to represent the characteristic value for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

49. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 47 wherein the means for integrating further comprises means for forming a standard deviation to represent the error range for each numerical field of the plurality of trade secret entries being integrated.

50. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, further comprising means for generating data mining signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

51. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, further comprising means for generating content filtering signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

52. (Previously Presented) The programmed computer for discovering trade secrets as in claim 28, further comprising means for generating electronic document scanning signatures from the collected trade secret information, or by the results of logical or mathematical formulae applied thereto.

Evidence Index

There is no evidence submitted pursuant to §§ 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132.

Related Proceedings Index

There are no related proceedings.

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